

GREEN-PIPES

POEMS AND PICTURES

BY

J. Paget Fredericks

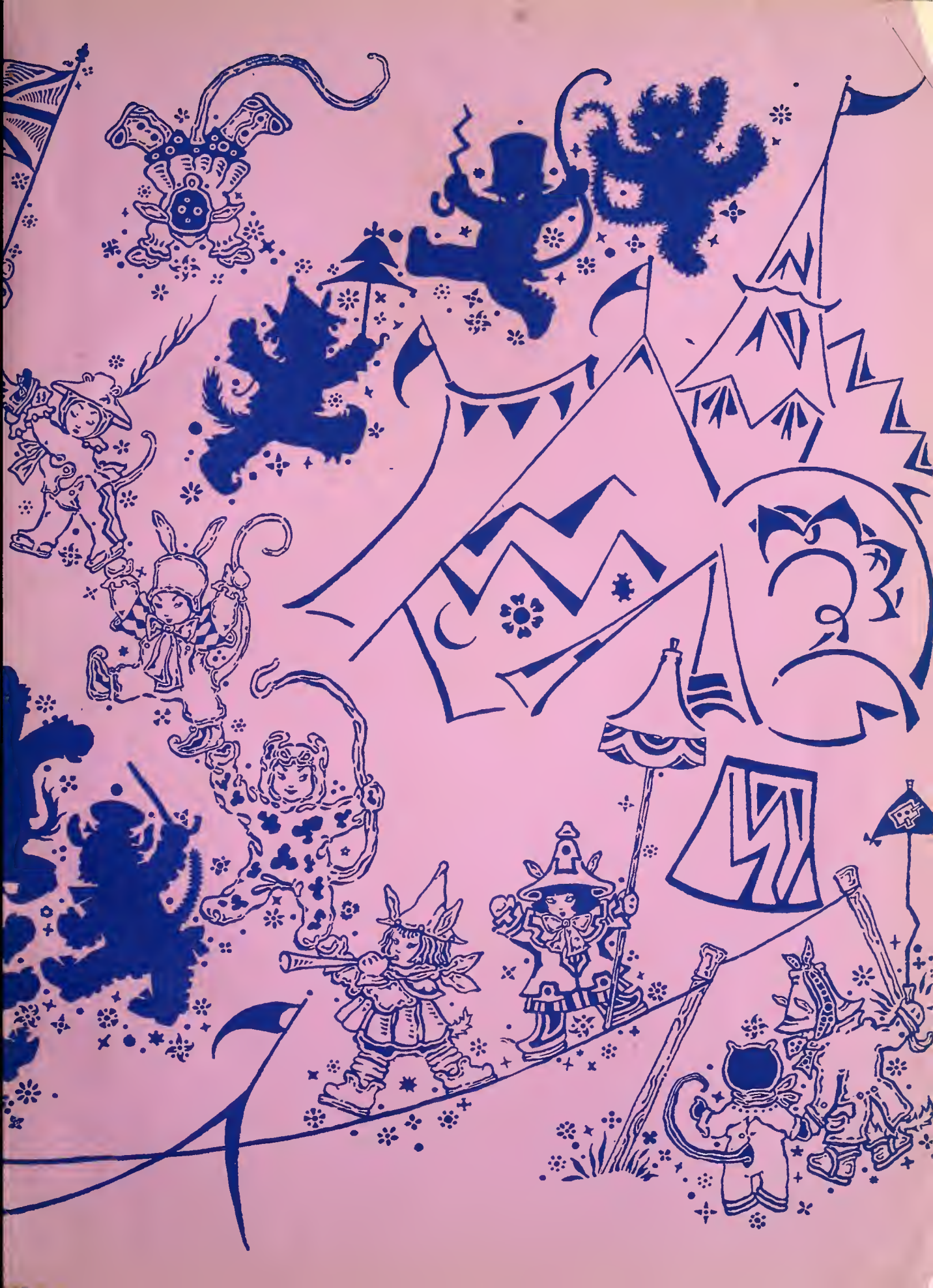


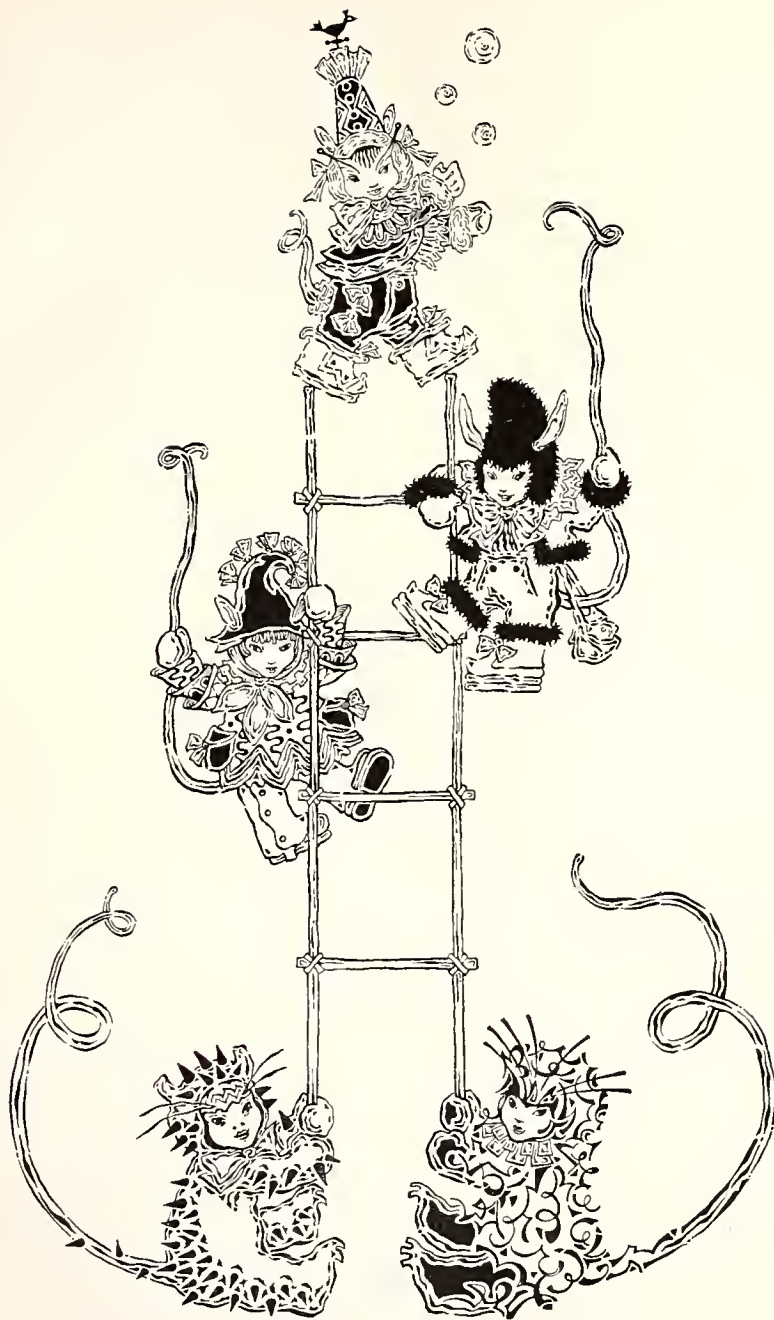


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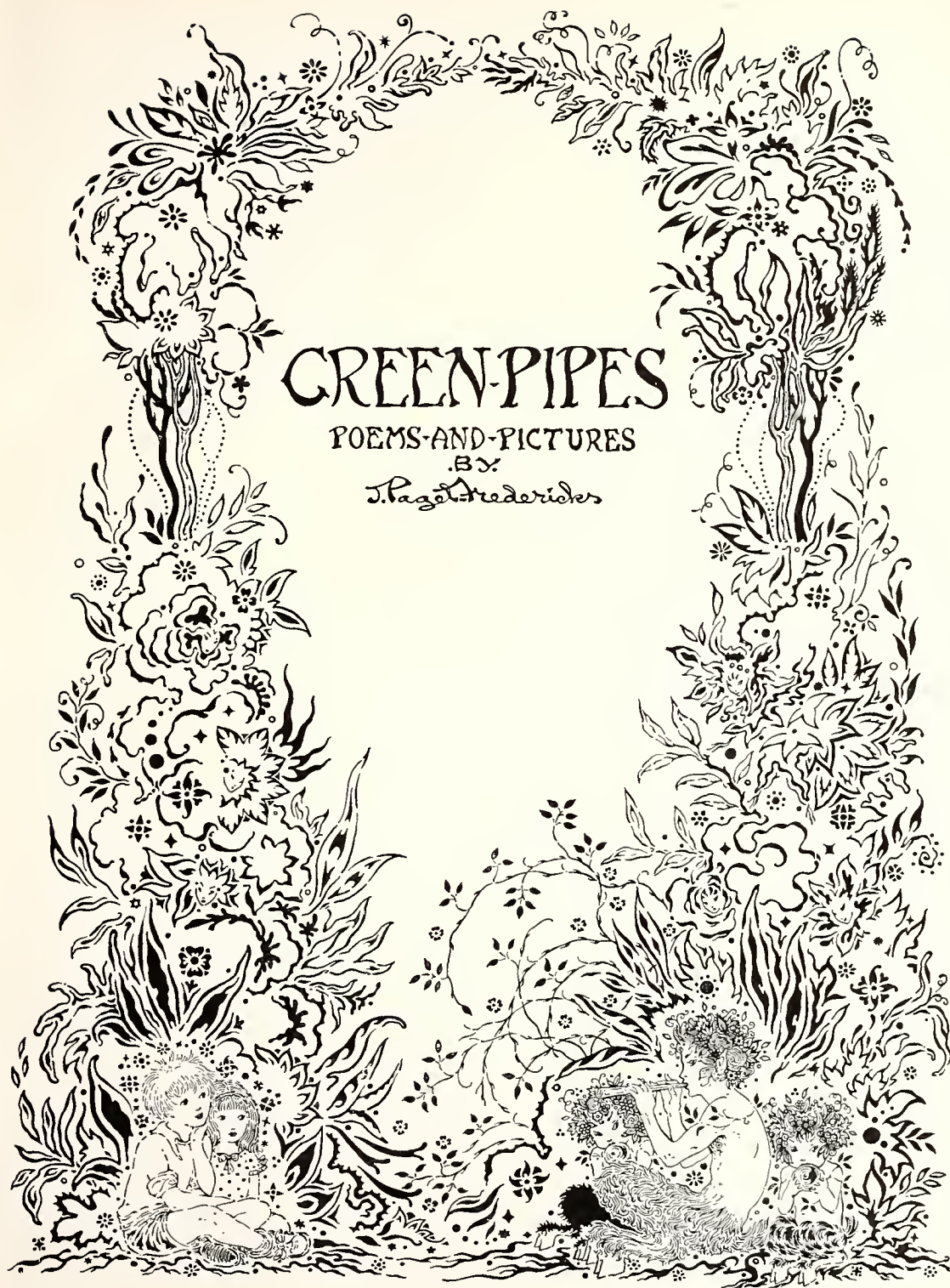


GREEN PIPES



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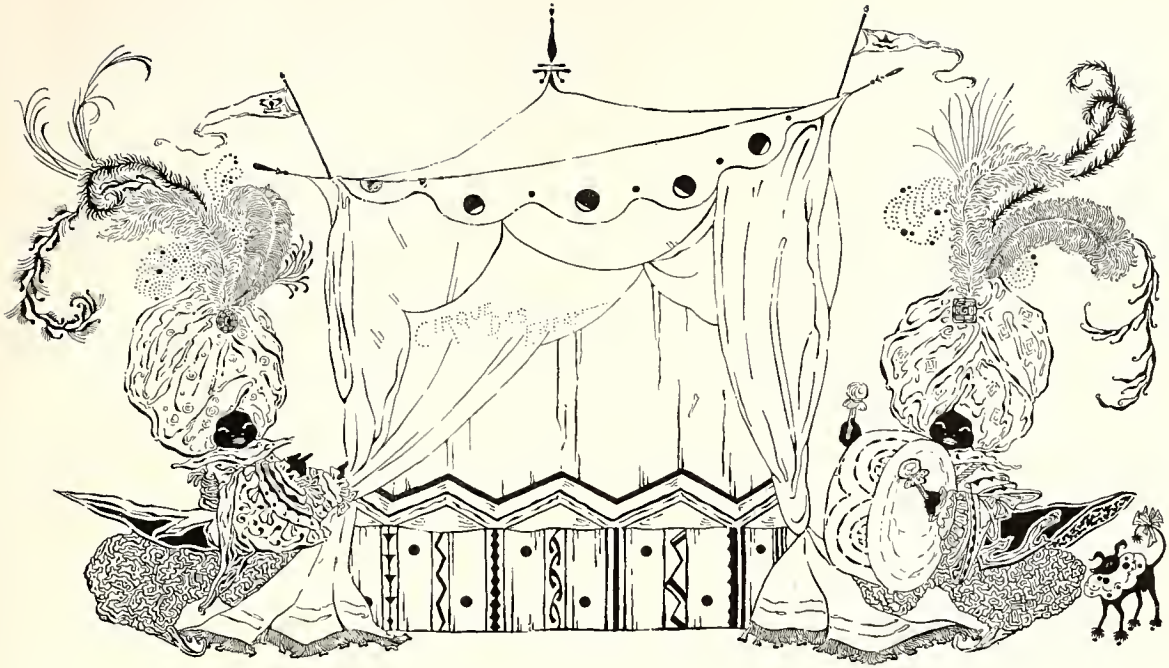
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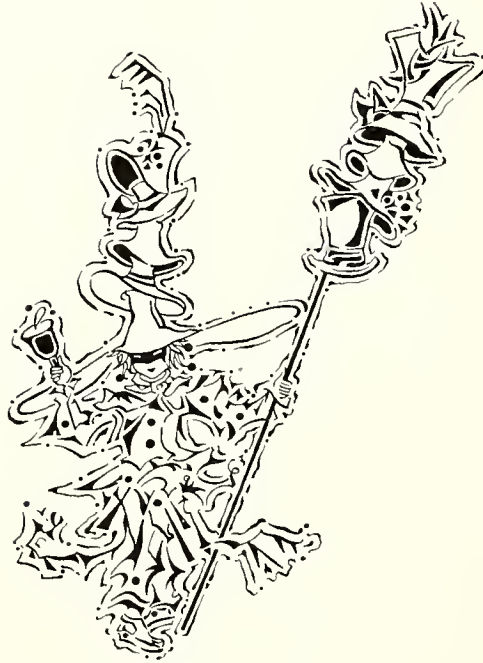


CONTENTS

	PAGE
IMAGININGS	I
TIPTOE	3
FLOWER SHADOWS	8
DUSK	9
PIPINGS	10
SMOKE SPRITE	12
ALAS AND ALACK	14
THE QUAINTS' PROCESSIONAL	15
WALKING ALONG	17
SNOW FAIRY	18
LONG TAILS	20
PIXIE FAIR	21
HAUNTED	23
LEAVES	25
ALONE	27
THE LOST GARDEN	28

CONTENTS

EYES	31
ELFIN CHILDREN	33
WINDOW WARNING	35
LITTLE BOY'S SONG	38
PIRATES-O!	40
WIND BLOWN	42





ILLUSTRATIONS

The Enchanted Flowers	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
Little Bower Dancer	8
The Quaints' Processional	15
Long Tails	20
The Bloody Pirate	40

GREEN PIPES





IMAGININGS

Imagine!

A tiny red door that leads under a hill,
Beneath roots and bright stones
And pebbly rill.

Imagine!

A quaint little knocker and shoe scraper too,
A curious carved key
Waiting for you.

Imagine!

Tiptoe on door mat, you're turning the key
The red door would open
And there you'd be.

Imagine!

Shut the red door tightly so no one should see
And no one would know then
Where you would be.

Imagine, if you can!



TIPTOE

Tiptoe we go
In plundered dusts
From cupboards deep
And old iron chests
Burnt with gold rusts,

In trailing smokes
Snake-scaled, jewel spattered,
Fay-woven, spun
Of colored silks,
Petal-tattered.

Along the hall
Of the still house
On twirling toes
We wind about
The shadowed house.

We promenade
At secret hours
Which no one knows,
Where no one goes,
Like costumed flowers.

* * * *

Tiptoe we go
Up creeping stair,
From garret grim
Then back again
To cellared lair.

In garden gloom
Under dark eaves
The old house sleeps,
By battered branch
And close-pressed leaves.

We peer into
Blue blackened dell,
For hiding face
Lurking within
The weed-grown well.



In waving lace
On brocade gown
Of cobweb grace,
We rustle past
Windows that frown.

* * * *

Tiptoe we go,
Fantastic we,
By hedgy lane
And boggy pit
Where white ghosts be.

Then back into
The garden's doze,
We skim again,
With small skilled hands
The green gate close.

Like phantom mice
To dreaming house
We steal again,
Up stair on stair,
Through yawning house,

Finger to lip,
Then with cockcrow
Loot we slip back
Close oaken lid,
And tiptoe go.





DUSK

At eventide when petals close
And all is dimly dusk,
After the faint still twilight glow
Shy stealing ghost-mists come and go,
Then vanish as grey dust.
When night's soft scarf twines from the sea
And all is quiet as can be,
Hush! There are sounds from tree to tree,
The trooping fairies come.

The towering dark cypress arms,
That reach into the night,
Brush their black, spire-spiked tips along
Far-off star scattered lights that throng
Deep dipped in moonlit white.
By ebon trunks are cloudy swarms
Of trailing misty spirit forms
That skim across the moss grown lawn.
The trooping fairies come.



PIPINGS

Pipe thee high and pipe thee low!
Faster and faster small feet go,
Twinkling, dancing over the hill,
Little fat toes never keep still.

Pipe thee high and pipe thee low!
Red baby mouths sing so and so
To tripping tunes of green Pan pipes,
That lilt and fall o'er hay-cocked heights.

Pipe thee high and pipe thee low!
Grown-up people must dance just so;
But wee folk skip in sunlit lanes
As blossoms blow on window panes.







SMOKE SPRITE

Sturdy am I,
With elfin eye,
Astride the sky.

Puffing and black
Thick smoke I pack
From chimney stack.

Curled in and out,
I blow about
In gleeful pout.

Stars cut in twain
I shoot again
Through cloud-bursts' rain.

Hurting anew,
Sleet piercing through
The wind-torn blue,

I whistle shrill
O'er storm-swept sill
From silent hill.



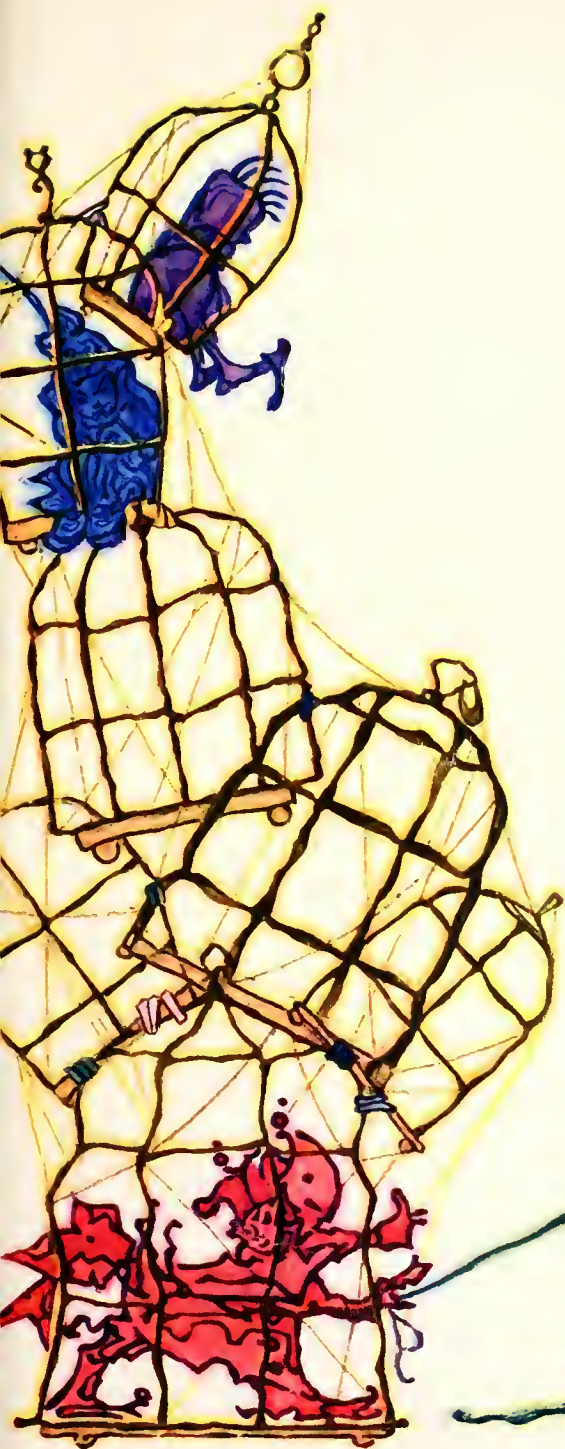


ALAS AND ALACK

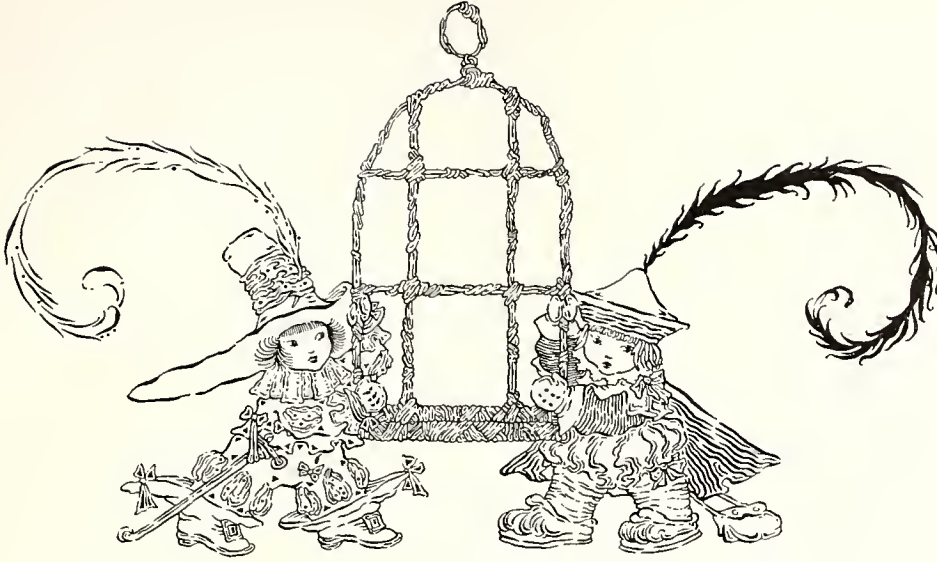
Alone in its loneliness
Under the trees,
Wild windy black branches
Pin-pricking to tease,
The sulky squat house
Blinks with shiver and sneeze.

Hunched into mudpuddles
Up to its nose
While trickling tears drip,
A chill rain-storm blows.
The cowled old house
Is alone with its woes.





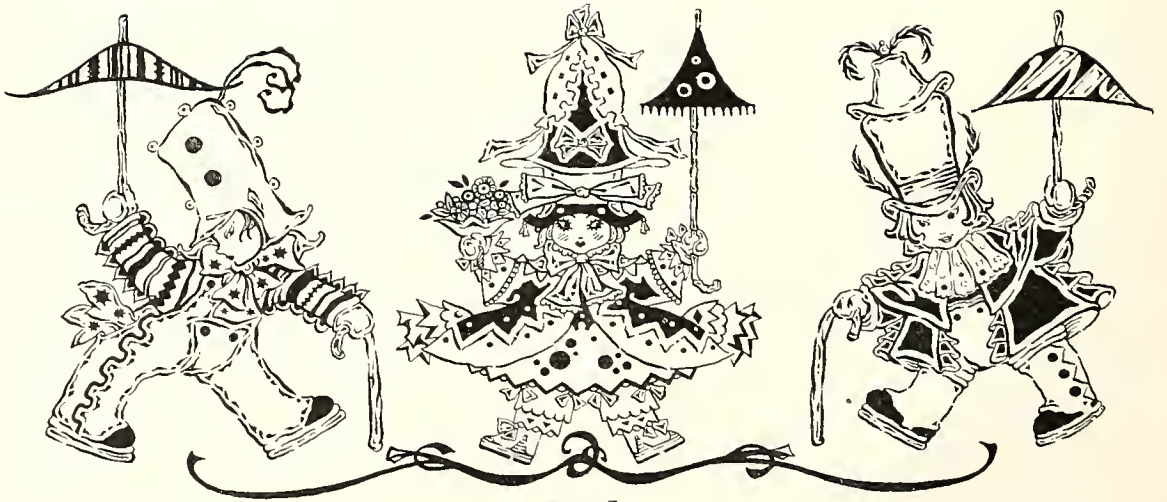
J. Paget-Fredericks



THE QUAIN'TS' PROCESSIONAL

Where are they going,
These fat little quain'ts?
They are up to some mischief
I'm sure,
Very sure,
With their amber umbrellas,
White candle-tipped ends,
And their purple-patched sacks,
All queer bulgings and bends,
They are up to some mischief,
I'm sure.

What are they planning,
These bad little quaints,
A-muttering, whispering about.
I'm sure
I don't know.
They have stolen my bird cage,
And taken yours too;
And I shan't be surprised
If they even steal you!
They are up to some mischief,
I'm sure.





WALKING ALONG

Little Simone walks up the hill.
Curly headed, with bare little knees,
Her golliwog snugly tucked under her arm,
Slowly, so slowly walks little Simone.
Then looking most quaintly at me,
And rubbing her eyes with a very faint sigh:
“Do carry my golliwog? Please.”

Little Simone walks up the hill,
A-dreaming along with the bees,
A-planning and thinking and looking about.
Two tiny ribbons has little Simone,
Stoops and plucks some nice grass blades near me,
Holds out baby hands, with a very faint sigh:
“Now carry my fairy greens? Please.”

Little Simone walks up the hill.
Wee black bows hide and seek as the breeze,
All frolicking, plays with her curly-head charm.
Slowly—so slowly walks little Simone.
Then looking half shyly at me,
And rubbing her eyes with a very faint sigh:
“My golly and green flowers—please.”



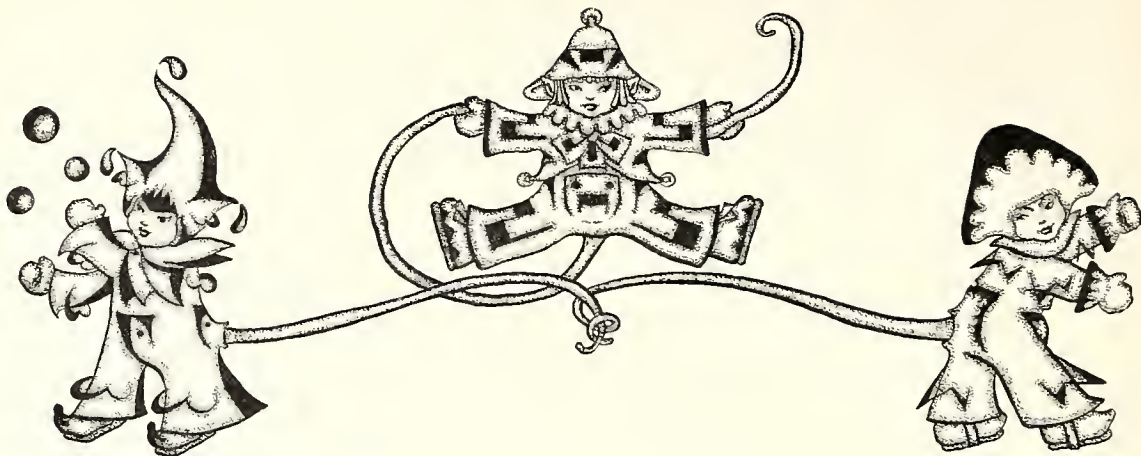
SNOW FAIRY

On the blue, shadow-trembling snow,
Still and listening,
I crouch in slim whiteness, with little bare knees.
Star-dust clouds my hair from gaunt, silver-leaved trees,
All still and listening.

Softly-encircling, dreamy flakes,
Still and sleeping,
Float, tinkling, in crystal-pure, slow phantom haze
Grey-glistening, glimmering, frozen moon-maze,
All still and sleeping.

I lull the snow with holly branch,
Still and dreaming,
And, in the blood-berries, frost-magic, a-dart,
Is weaving glass spells that have entered my heart,
All still and dreaming.





LONG TAILS

Wee heels atop each other,
Odd twisting tail-tip twiddles,
Cut strings of goblin fiddles,
Pagoda-tree of riddles.

Spry young queers, high up, indeed
Have a most delightful time,
Squeal the grumpy ones below
"It's *our* turn to have a climb!"

Sprig hats with wriggly feathers,
But night caps for the humble,
If tired arms should fumble,—
Oh! . . . then there'll be a tumble!



J. Page K. Fredericks.



PIXIE FAIR

Three little maids
In fresh white frocks,
With saucy pink ribbons
And shoes and socks,
Fresh-picked primroses in their hair,
Started off to the pixie fair.

One saw a blackbird fly
Out of an oak
That was old and gnarled,
With withered weeds cloaked.
After the blackbird into the wood
The little maid ran fast as she could.

One saw a cool stream
Wind in and out
Of the willowy shade;
So she turned about
And down to the water—quick as a flash——
She dashed to sail leaves, and otherwise splash.

The third saw some bluebells
Over a stile,
By a hazy sweet meadow,
A quaint nosegay pile.
Over the stile the little maid climbed
To make fairy wreaths, while green crickets chimed.

Three little naughties
Went to the fair,
But—quite as you see——
They never reached there.
When it was tea time home they might stray.
So pixies must plan for another fair day.





HAUNTED

In the depths of a wood——
“Which way, if you please?”
A little boy stood,
In the depths of a wood.

And a witch peered out
From her half-hidden house;
Through the leaves by the door,
A witch peered out.

A black cat slid down.
From the tumbled-thatch roof;
With a green eye and brown,
A black cat slid down.

On the blue cobblestones,
Both stared at the boy
Neath the whispering trees,
Both stared at the boy.

But never a word
The little boy heard,
On this still summer eve,
No—never a word.

In the depths of a wood,
“Which way, if you please?”
A little boy stood
And wept in the wood.



LEAVES

The leaves are falling
One by one,
Soft goblin gold
Dust in the sun.
Vermilion-gold,
Now mellow bronze,
Slipping, falling,
One by one.

A crinkled curling leaf
All quivering gold-winged, green,
And perched atop, a cross-legged elf,
Sly-winking, sprightly-lean,
With twirling tendriled toes,
Such sharp and saucy teeth!
He in his puckish mouth, slick-sucks,
Wry rose crab-apple meat.

Two tiny tippéd horns
Tickle his bit of nose.
All impish glee, fantastic thing,
In gossamer faërie clothes.
He spins leaves to and fro,
Wind flashes in and out,
But where's the rogue? He's disappeared
In scattered gold about.

The leaves are falling
One by one,
Soft goblin gold
Dust in the sun.
Vermilion-gold,
Now mellow bronze,
Slipping, falling,
One by one.



ALONE

I never had walked quite so far
Alone,
And as I closed the garden gate
And slipped into the leafy lane
And saw the winding road ahead,
I felt so very quite alone,
Walking along alone.

I had n't gone so very far
Alone,
When all the staring huge oak trees
Came shuffling, crowding round me;
And then I wished I was at home.
I felt so very quite alone,
Walking along alone.

A few more steps to the road's bend
Alone,
And then I stole a glance ahead.
It's awfully shady, dark beyond,
So I just turned and ran and ran.
I felt so very quite alone;
But better, . . . running home.



THE LOST GARDEN

The great yew hedges tracings cast
Upon the green and uncut grass;
Strange shadows twist among the trees.

The drowsy summer air distils
Rare fragrances from flowers filled
With treasure for the droning bees.

The old fish pond's grey-rippled, deep;
A cloud of water lilies sleep
Amid the reeds and dragon-flies.

Black butterflies skim vaguely by
The honeysuckled garden paths,
Like midnight petals on the lawn.



Dark heliotrope and lilac-bloom,
Mid circling wreathéd vines, entomb
The old bronze statue of a faun.

Against the rambling, brown stone walls,
Tall golden broom, a-shower, falls,
Upon the sundial in the sun.

All is so still and quiet here;
Perhaps the ghosts of children fare
Betwixt the shadows and the sun.

A garden lost to all but those
Who pause unseen, in tendriled dusk,
To listen where the wild rose blows.





EYES

In the darkness of the hall
Tiny eyes are watching me,
Shining sparks of silvered green
Watching, watching me.

Look! the cupboard has closed.
Wee, small hands, quick finger tipped,
Slipped the key out of the lock.

Nimble legs go scurrying by,
Bramble flecked in cobweb green
Whisk away before half seen.

There is hid a peakéd ear
Dewdrop crimson-berry hung,
By the jam pot on the shelf.

Mischief mouthed, with pert curled tongue,
What was that that tweaked my cheek?
Prankish sprite—sly, elfin, sweet.

Hist! the window curtains sway!
Whispered laughter as I turn!
Chatter, patter, all is still.

In the darkness of the hall
Tiny eyes are watching me.
Shining sparks of silvered green
Watching, watching me.





ELFIN CHILDREN

I know where there's a crumbling place;
I fly there in the night,
But it is rather hard to find
Unless you have the guiding moon,
With dim face coldly white.

I wake at midnight's secret hour,
From bed soft-stealing, seek
The window, open shutters wide,
Then off away to tree-top paths
Like tiny night-light streak.

O'er sleeping fields, away I float
With starlings winging fast,
The straggling moonbeams hurry on;
They know where I am flying to,
And who'll be first—who last?

Glimmering green in whispering dell
Against the pitchy sky,
In witch-light strands from rolling clouds
I see the trysting place, soot-roofed,
As sulky bats swarm by.

Through incense-curtained, whirling gloom,
Small slippered figures pass
A-tiptoe up the wind-swept hall,
To creaking shadowed turret stair
Where sighs an undreamed Mass.

Hushed songs sift through cracked panes,
All in the waning light,
The rushing gale beats round the moat
No human ere hath passed beyond
That sad wind's sweeping might.

Then from the windowed heights we stream,
By silent starlit mire,
Fast from the dark and hidden house
Deserted in the faint moonlight,
Back to our nursery fire.





WINDOW WARNING

The Poet to the Child:

Snuggle down deep,
Bed clothes over your head!
There's a wee fairy thing, a-beckoning—calling!
Stuff the sheets into
Your pink little ears!
There's a wee fairy thing, a-beckoning—calling!
Burrow down deep
To the end of the bed.
Coverlet, blankets all over your spread.
There's a wee thing tip-tapping and a-calling!

The Child:

Yes, I will be a changeling!
Won't—shan't be a changeling.
Yes, I shall be a changeling,
Before morning!

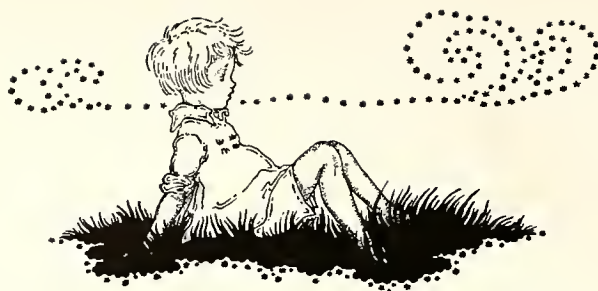
The Changeling-Child to the Poet:

So now I'm tip-tapping
On *your* window tap-tapping!
Won't you be a changeling with me,
Before morning?





Forget-Frederick



LITTLE BOY'S SONG

Through the thicket have I spied
Fairy rings midst daisies pied,
And goblin toadstools springing.

In the tree tops have I seen
Birds' nests built the leaves between,
Where boughs are ever swinging.

By the brooklet have I been,
Cooled my toes near fishes' fin
And heard the waters singing.

On the hillside have I run
With white foam-clouds 'gainst the sun;
The waving wind-grass skimming.





PIRATES-O!

A-watching by the turnpike road
That rambles to the sea,
'Neath clutching fog a gallows grim
In snapping bracken caught,
I saw a fearsome Pirate-man
Swaggering by.

All whipped about by sharp salt gales
Wave-hissing from the sea,
Cock-cornered hat, gay smuggled scarf,
And bloody sword unsheathed,
He prowling strode through tangled gloom,
Lest spying eyes there be.





He hurried where dark-mottled crags
Lie crooked above the sea;
His buckled boots stuffed with doubloons
Crushed heather ankle deep!
He had a gleeful, wicked eye,
And plaid coat-patches three.

By thorny thicket coldly clasped
In bleak gusts from the sea,
He staggered on against the wind,
His hairy chest all wet with rain,
And dapper lace, round satin sleeves,
Briar-torn and hanging free.

Stealthy, he trod down treacherous sands
To tossing, threatening sea
Where blinked ship lantern-lights afar
With spiteful cat's-eyed sting.
His mumbling crew had waited long
Ready to flee.





WIND BLOWN

The Cry:

I have searched far
For fairy folk,
So frail and fine,
In hidden pools
Where moon flowers are.
I have searched far
In haunted depths
Of white-lipped stars
For fairy folk,
So frail and fine;
I have searched far.

Echo:

You never find
Frail fairy folk
By searching far;
You never find.
As silvery wind
They steal o'er you,
And then you find
Frail fairy folk.
You never find
Frail fairy folk
By searching far.







